

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 1 through 20 are pending in the application and the Examiner rejected all claims.

Claim Rejections, 35 U.S.C. §102

In item 2 on pages 2-4 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,275,223 to Hughes ("Hughes").

The Present Invention

The present invention provides a method and system for providing user assistance in connection with a computer program, a method and system that combines an active display of the past, current, and future steps in an ongoing process with a series of associated decision panels and forms to be completed in order to carry out the steps. The invention provides user assistance for the completion of complex sequential tasks and is a means of providing user assistance in the execution of complex, multi-step tasks, wherein the steps have sequential dependencies. These could be any such tasks performed by a single user with a computer.

The present invention displays the task steps already performed (past), currently being performed (present), and to be performed (future) by the user in the display adjacent to the primary client window in a selectable format. The user is able to see the steps abstractly represented in the window and may move between steps by selecting an item in the navigator bar.

U.S. Patent No. 6,275,223 to Hughes

U.S. Patent No. 6,272,223 to Hughes ("Hughes") is a code inspection tool that interfaces with a known configuration management system to load a quantity of original source code. It discloses a multi-user tool that facilitates the process of source code inspection, and is restricted to the task of code inspection. The system of Hughes includes a side-by-side display of the original source code and modified source code. Changes to either are marked visually, and statistics are compiled on the code inspection process such as the lines of code inspected, the time of inspection, and the like.

The Cited Prior Art Does Not Anticipate the Claimed Invention

The MPEP and case law provide the following definition of anticipation for the purposes of 35 U.S.C. §102:

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." MPEP §2131 citing *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Company of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987)

Applicant acknowledges that Hughes discloses side-by-side display of information by a computer system. However, as noted above, the side-by-side display in Hughes is a display of original source code and modified source code. This gives a user of the system the ability to visually see the changes that have been made between sections of source code. Hughes has no applicability outside of the ability to perform code inspection tasks, and there is no ability to select items in either of the windows to enable navigation within the windows. The side-by-side display of Hughes simply shows code lines so that they can be compared, not so that they can be selected and navigated through.

By contrast, the present invention allows a user of a complex, multi-step task system to view abstractly the steps available and move between the steps by **selecting** an item in the navigator bar. Each of the steps are **selectable** through mouse or other form of manipulation, not merely displayed as the code steps of Hughes are displayed.

Each of the independent claims of the present invention, as amended (and therefore, all dependent claims as well), include specific recitation of this limitation (e.g., claim 1 - "...each of said procedures comprising an interrelated series of selectable steps...said navigator bar displaying a visual representation of said interrelated series of selectable steps associated with said currently selected step."). Accordingly, claims 1-20 patentably define over Hughes. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

Conclusion

The present invention is not taught or suggested by the prior art. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejection of the claims. An early Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

Enclosed herewith, in triplicate, is a Petition for extension of time to respond to the Examiner's Action. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees


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or credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 19-5425.

Respectfully submitted

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